SOCIETY OF ARTS.

March 6.—Benjamin Rotch, Esq., V.P., in the chair.

The Chairman described Ellis's improved turn-table and weighing-machine.

The great objection to placing turn-tables of the ordinary construction on the main line of a railway, is that, by the nature of their construction, they are rapidly destroyed by the frequent passage of heavy trains over them, besides the injury done to the carriages, and the unpleasant motion and noise caused to the passengers.

Mr. Ellis has constructed a turn-table which, when not in use for turning engines or carriages, rests firmly on the curb, and thus allows the train to pass rapidly over them without injuring either the table itself, or engines, or carriages.

The iron pintle of the table on which it turns, being kept well oiled, works with a loose collar round it in a vertical iron case, which case is supported and kept in its central position by two cross arms of cast-iron at right-angles to each other, and attached to the curb; the lower end of the pintle passes through the bottom of the case, below which is a stirrup attached to a cross lever passing at one end through a chase in the circular masonry or brickwork supporting the table; attached to the external end of the long lever is a second lever, working in a vertical direction, and connected with a third, or handle lever, by which the table is put in motion or fixed as required. When the table is to be put in motion, the stirrup is raised by means of the system of levers, and the pintle, resting in a conical cup attached to the stirrup, causes the table to be raised from its bearing on the curb.

The table is converted into a weighing machine by attaching a steel-yard to the external end of the cross-stirrup lever.

The Secretary read an account of the result of the experiment lately made in Regent and Oxford Streets, as to daily cleansing the streets of the metropolis, from which it appears that—

The experiment was commenced on the 2nd of January, in the present year, and was continued until the 20th of the same month, inclusive, being nineteen days: 35 men, and 3·89 boys were, on an average, daily employed, at the rate of twelve hours a day.

The average area of surface, swept by Whitworth's machines, amounted to 184[illegible] superficial yards, and the quantity of soil slop, &c. removed by the machines, averaged rather more than three loads per day, or at the rate of one load for 613 superficial yards swept by the machine.

The average cost per day was at the rate of 8*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.*

The total area kept continually clean during the 19 days of experiment amounted to 27,000 superficial yards; and, taking the boys at ½ to a man, the average area kept clean continually by each man, with the occasional aid of the machines at night, was equal to 730 superficial yards.

The expense per house for effecting this desirable object was found to be at the rate of 1*s.* 2*d.* per week; but it is evident, that if a complete system of cleansing the metropolitan streets daily were carried into effect, the cost would be materially reduced, as a large proportion of the mud collected during the experiment was transferred from the adjacent macadamized roads.

The Secretary read a short paper on Robson's patent signal lights, which are of three colours, viz., white, red, and green, the composition being contained in paper cases attached to small wooden handles.

Ignition is produced by means of a small glass globule of sulphuric acid, placed in an aperture in the handle, immediately above which is placed a small cake of oxymuriate of potash, divided from the globule by means of a small tin slide. In the aperture, works a wooden screw; and when the slide has been withdrawn, the screw is turned against the glass globule so as to break it, and the acid and oxymuriate of potash being brought into contact, the fire is communicated to the top of the charge by means of a quick match cased through the centre.

The practical application of these lights to an universal system of numerical signals proposed by Mr. Whishaw, the Secretary, was shewn at the back of the Society's repository.

To give notice, a projectile light is used, from which various balls are thrown up a considerable height above the operator; and for particular signals, cases containing the three different colours are used.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.

Feb 1.—Thomas Amyot, Esq., in the chair.

Albert Way, Esq., Director, exhibited some specimens of Egyptian hieroglyphics, printed from a set of moveable types (upwards of three hundred in number) by the house of Didot of Paris.

Mr. C. J. Richardson exhibited drawings of a stone rood-screen, with an hour-glass and frame still attached to the pulpit, in Compton Bassett church, Wilts. The screen is a beautiful specimen of the late Perpendicular Gothic. They were accompanied by a drawing of the font at Yatesbury church, in the same county, a curious and rich specimen of the ornamental style of the end of the twelfth century.

Mr. Way exhibited a rubbing of a fine and instrumental monumental brass from the church of Allhallows, Barking.

Mr. C. R. Smith communicated a drawing and description of an early monumental slab of granite, found on the cliff of Carnsew, in Cornwall. It bears an inscription, slightly damaged, which is as follows, and appears to commemorate two persons:—

HIC
OSMV
REQVIEVIT
[illegible]VNAIDO
HIC
TUMVLO
IACIT
VIXIT AN
NOS
XXXIII.

Dr. Bromet exhibited some drawings of Newark Priory, in Surrey, and a few antiquities lately discovered there; among which were an inscribed thumb-ring, the matrix of a seal, and two enamelled armorial badges, supposed to have been worn by the retainers of the personages whose arms they bear.

Sir Henry Ellis read extracts from the minutes of the privy council, from the 32nd to the 34th Henry VIII.

Feb. 15. Lord Viscount Mahon, V.P., in the chair.

Albert Way, Esq., Director, exhibited a rubbing of a commemorative engraved slab, representing St. Louis, King of France, and two of his serjeants-at-arms, formerly placed in the monastery of Sainte Catharine du Val at Paris, founded by those officers in pursuance of a vow made by them at the battle of Bovines in 1214. It was removed at the revolution, and is preserved in the royal catacombs at St. Denis. It is richly gilded and painted; its date the earlier part of the 15th century. Engraved by Lenoir, in Musée des Monumens Français, vol. i., p. 29.

Two long spoon-shaped instruments, and two thin plates, all of gold, were exhibited. They were brought from South America, and used, it is believed, for ornament in the hair.

Albin Martin, Esq., of Silton, Dorsetshire, exhibited to the society, through the medium of Mr. Kempe, some articles of antiquity, and original drawings by his own hand of fresco paintings; the latter preserved in the Museo Borbonico at Naples. We describe them in the order as exhibited.

No. 1 of this collection is a head sculpture in Rosso Anticho, from the remains of the Temple of Apollo at Cumæ. It represents the bearded Bacchus, the mode of displaying this divinity as conqueror of the East. The countenance is youthful, the hair disposed round the forehead in curls somewhat resembling a wreath of roses, and a straight lock of hair is dependent on each side of the head. The eyes are hollowed out, probably for the reception of jewels.

No. 2 is an elegantly-formed bronze vase, brought from Pompeii; it has evidently been cracked by the action of intense heat, and is covered with crystals of blue sulphate of copper. Mr. Kempe remarked that the sulphureous exhalations which arose from the earth and pervaded the atmosphere at the time of the tremendous eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, in the 79th year of the Christian era, were so powerful that they suffocated the elder Pliny on the sea-shore at Stabia, supposed to have been at Castella Mare, about four miles from Pompeii.

No. 3 is a copy of a group of divinities from a fresco painting, taken from an apartment at Herculaneum; it represents Hercules, Flora Tellus, and other mythological characters.

No. 4 is a copy of a fresco from Pompeii representing a satyr dancing with a goat, a very expressive and humorous composition.

No. 5. Another fresco from Pompeii, representing Atalanta, from the well-known group of Meleager, Atalanta, and attendants.

No. 6 is from a fresco painting at Pompeii representing Justice. The figure has all the simple grandeur of attitude which the late Mrs. Siddons could so well portray.

Nos. 7 and 8 are ornamental borders from chambers in Pompeii.

No. 8 is a careful drawing of the remains of the temple of Venus at Baiæ. The structure is of Roman brick; this was formerly covered with white marble.

No. 9 is a view of the Street of the Tombs at Puzzuoli. They were seated on a branch of the Appian Way, and were buried at a remote period by one of those convulsions of the earth so prevalent in this volcanic district. The tombs, which are larger than those at Pompeii, were, at subsequent times, dug out and rifled of their contents. They have now the appearance of caverns on either side a hollow way. The drawings of Mr. A. Martin display considerable power as an artist combined with the strictest truth.

Sir Henry Ellis communicated from the Cottonian MSS. a project for amending the sewerage of the city of London, from the waters near St. Agnes le Clere, dated 20th April, 1605.

Thomas Bateman, jun., Esq., of Bakewell, communicated a description of several barrows in Derbyshire, opened by him during the summer of 1843, accompanied with numerous drawings of the relics discovered in them. It was found that most of them had been opened before.

Feb. 22.—Mr. Hamilton in the chair.

William Staunton, Esq., of Longbridge house, near Warwick, exhibited an original appointment by Letters Patent of the Duke of Somerset as Protector of Edward the Sixth. It is of a different date to those before known, and is signed by all the Privy Council, but appears never to have received the great seal. It is supposed to have been preserved among the muniments of the Griffin family, descended from the Attorney-general of that period.

John Gough Nichols, Esq., F.S.A., communicated a paper on the ancient Amity existing between the Companies of Goldsmiths and Fishmongers of London, and their consequent participation of coat-armour. This singular circumstance, which is mentioned by Stowe in connection with the former, seems scarcely to have been understood by him, inasmuch as there is no community in the arms of the two companies, and he offers no other explanation than Mr. Nichols points out several private coats, principally of citizens, and some certain Fishmongers, in which fish are found as charges in combination with the leopard's head of the Goldsmiths, and he therefore concludes that the participation took place in those private coats. The circumstance occurred at an early period, probably in the reign of Edward III., and therefore long before the incorporation of College of Heralds could legislate on blazon.

Smokeless Steam Coal Company. The prospectus of a company under this name has been issued, in which it is stated that the estimates and calculations made, the net profits to the company will yield annually upwards of 50 per cent. on the shares. We must confess we are somewhat dubious on this point, and the prospectus appears to us to require some elucidation. It is under such circumstances that we are induced to defer any observations until our next, while we shall, in the meantime, have an opportunity of satisfying ourselves on one or two points. The collieries extend over a tract of 1,300 acres, and have, it is stated, considerable advantages and facilities of shipment.

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